



"THESE CRITICS (STILL) DON'T WRITE ENOUGH ABOUT WOMEN ARTISTS": Gender Inequality in the Newspaper Coverage of Arts and Culture in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, 1955-2005

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“THESE CRITICS (STILL) DON’T WRITE ENOUGH ABOUT WOMEN ARTISTS”:

Gender Inequality in the Newspaper Coverage of Arts and Culture in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, 1955-2005

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This article addresses the extent and ways in which gender inequality in the newspaper coverage of arts and culture has changed in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, 1955-2005. Through a quantitative content analysis, we mapped all articles that appeared in two elite newspapers in each country in four sample years 1955, 1975, 1995, and 2005 (n = 15,379). First, despite increasing women’s employment in arts and culture and a quantitative feminization of journalism, elite newspaper coverage of women in arts and culture has hardly changed, making up about 20-25 percent consistently over the last 50 years. Second, our results show surprisingly few cross-national differences in the amount of the newspaper coverage devoted to women in arts and culture. Third, although women are underrepresented in the coverage of all artistic genres, there is some evidence of horizontal sex segregation—particularly in architecture (stereotypical masculine) and modern dance and fashion (stereotypical feminine)—as well as vertical sex segregation—in that attention to women has increased in “highbrow” genres that have declined in status. Finally, as the status of an actor type increases from laymen to artistic directors, the proportion of women decreases in newspaper attention to arts and culture.

Keywords: *arts and culture; journalism; sex segregation; cross-national; longitudinal*

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Already in 1985, feminist art collective Guerrilla Girls created a poster titled “These Critics Don’t Write Enough about Women Artists.” It included the names of 21 art critics and stated: “Between 1979 & 1985, less than 20% of the feature articles & reviews of one-person shows by these critics were about art made by women” (Guerrilla Girls 1995, 37). In the Netherlands, Mirjam Westen, curator of the Museum of Modern Art in Arnhem, suggested that the absence of women in leading positions in visual arts is due partly to a decline in reviews of women artists appearing in art magazines (Weijts 2006). German art historian Wibke von Bonin (2002) therefore asked the question: “Will Guerrilla girls thus make trouble in this country, too?” This concern regarding media underrepresentation of women artists is understandable. Although the number of artists and creative professionals has risen sharply in recent decades in both Western Europe and the United States, few are able to sustain a stable, permanent career in the arts (Menger 2006). Elite newspapers—targeting the governing, intellectual, and cultural elite—have traditionally been important in legitimizing cultural forms (Baumann 2001; Bourdieu 1993). Not only because they influence the perception of their readership and thus partly affect artistic careers (Berkers, Janssen, and Verboord 2011; Janssen 1997), but also because they largely determine whether and how other media and the wider community discuss topics such as gender inequality (Janssen, Kuipers, and Verboord 2008, 725).

Following Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin (1999), we define gender inequality as a system of social practices within society that constitutes men and women as different in socially significant ways and organizes relations of inequality on the basis of these differences. To persist, gender as a system of structural inequality requires that both men’s and women’s experiences and widely shared cultural beliefs confirm for them that men and women are sufficiently different in ways that justify men’s greater power and privilege (Ridgeway 2011). Considering the key position of elite media, their coverage is likely to partly structure the beliefs of their readers and society at large, possibly providing a “real” basis for existing gender beliefs. For example, a lack of media attention to female architects might confirm beliefs that women “simply” do not make good architects. This article examines gender inequality primarily as the ratio of female to male social actors in the arts and culture appearing in elite newspapers, as coverage quantity may matter even more than actual content in media audience reception (Shor et al. 2014, 659). Therefore, the

research question is: To what extent and in what ways has gender inequality changed in the elite newspaper coverage of arts and culture for the countries France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, in the period 1955-2005?

Through a quantitative content analysis, we mapped all articles ($n = 15,379$) about arts and culture in two elite newspapers in each country of four constructed weeks for the years 1955, 1975, 1995, and 2005. Studying longitudinal trends, we find that elite newspaper coverage of women in arts and culture has hardly changed, making up about 20-25 percent consistently over a 50-year period. In contrast, change toward gender equality in other societal fields has only recently stalled (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011; Ridgeway 2011). Also, our results show surprisingly few cross-national differences in the amount of arts and culture newspaper coverage devoted to women vis-à-vis men, despite macrocultural and macrostructural differences between the studied countries. Further, we found evidence of horizontal sex segregation, particularly in architecture (stereotypical masculine) and modern dance and fashion (stereotypical feminine), as well as vertical sex segregation in that attention to women has increased in “high-brow” genres that have declined in status. Finally, as the status of an actor type increases from laymen to artistic directors (Becker 1982), the proportion of women seems to decrease in newspaper coverage of arts and culture.

These findings make significant empirical and theoretical contributions, as there is little scientific research on structural gender inequality in the media coverage of arts and culture. First, whereas most studies focus on artistic classifications, this study finds that critical evaluations are often guided by extra-textual factors such as gender (Berkers and Eeckelaer 2014; Schmutz and Faupel 2010), particularly when the value of cultural objects is ambiguous (Stokes 2015). Second, previous research conducted mainly in the United States has examined the careers of men and women within one artistic genre, such as film (Bielby and Bielby 1996), television (Bielby and Bielby 1992), classical music (Cameron 2003), popular music (Dowd, Liddle, and Blyler 2005), dance (Van Dyke 1996) or architecture (Caven 2004). In contrast, this study describes and—to the extent our data allow us—clarifies longitudinal and cross-national gender inequality in the media coverage of arts and culture. We compare four countries (France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States) that are similar in some respects; they all are Western democracies receptive to egalitarian beliefs in which the gender pay gap has narrowed since the 1970s

(Wharton 2012) and the percentage of women working in arts and culture increased since 1955. At the same time, they are different in other respects; the United States and Germany have comparatively more gender inequality, both structurally and culturally. Comparing across countries, time, and genres helps us to evaluate the scope of gender inequality in the elite media coverage of arts and culture. Through these analyses, we can draw conclusions about the development of women's emancipation in arts and culture, which—given the symbolic status of the arts—provides a window for the position of women in society as a whole.

MACRODEVELOPMENTS IN GENDER INEQUALITY

Gender Inequality in Cultural Fields

The amount of newspaper attention devoted to women is likely to be related partly to their position in the cultural field itself. A simple reflection model would suggest that the higher the number of women employed in cultural fields, the more attention they would receive in elite newspapers (Griswold 1981). Table 1—based on secondary data—shows the women employed in arts and culture as a proportion of the total working population in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States from 1975 to 2005.¹ The differences between the countries are relatively small. The participation of women (compared to the total number of people employed in arts and culture) has gradually increased in all countries, from about 30-35 percent around 1975, 40-45 percent in the nineties, to 45-50 percent in 2005. As such, developments in cultural fields are relatively similar to what research on women's labor force participation has shown, that is, a widespread rise in women's participation due to a relative increase in service employment, the expansion of educational opportunities for women, and the rise of gender egalitarian beliefs (Wharton 2012).

Hypothesis 1: The degree of gender inequality in elite newspaper coverage of arts and culture will (1a) show a decrease from 1955 to 2005 in all four countries and (1b) show few cross-national differences.

Macrostructural and Macrocultural Gender Inequality

While in practice, newspaper coverage may neatly reflect the population, the media shape—and are part of—the practices and beliefs about gender inequality in a given society. There are different ways to measure

TABLE 1: Percentage of Women Working in Arts and Culture of the Total (Arts and Culture) Working Population.

	1955 ^a	1975	1995	2005
France				
<i>Le secteur culturel</i>	-	31% (1982)	37% (1999)	47%
Total working population	-	40% (1982)	45% (1999)	46%
Germany				
<i>Künstler/innen und zugeordnete Berufe</i>	-	33% (1970) ^b	41% (1999)	43%
Total working population	-	37% (1970)	44% (1999)	45%
Netherlands				
<i>Kunst cultuur en loterij</i>	-	37%	47%	51%
Total working population	-	32%	42%	46%
United States				
<i>Artist occupations</i>	-	31% (1970)	44% (1990)	46%
Total working population	-	38% (1970)	46% (1990)	46%

SOURCE: France: Cléron and Patureau (2007), INSEE (2008, 2009); Germany: Federal Reserve Economic Data (2013), Fohrbeck and Wiesand (1975), IAB (2013); The Netherlands: CBS (2007), Statline (<http://statline.cbs.nl/>); United States: NEA (1994, 2008).

a. Data for 1955 are unavailable.

b. Data refer to West Germany.

gender inequality at the national level, but comparable data for all four countries over a 50-year period are not available. To measure macrostructural gender inequality, the United Nations (2011) have used the Gender Inequality Index (GII) (0-1), which consists of three dimensions: health (maternal mortality and fertility), power (representation in parliament and education), and labor (women’s participation). This index shows that the gender inequality score for the United States is higher, increasing respectively from 0.284 (1995) to 0.311 (2005). In comparison, the other three countries show a decrease from 0.184 to 0.105 in Germany, 0.146 to 0.139 in France, and 0.095 to 0.077 in the Netherlands. In addition, Hofstede (1998) has developed a macrocultural index of gender inequality. This “masculinity” index (MAS) (0-100) indicates the extent to which gender roles are strongly bounded in a country. A high score means that men are expected to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success. Women, by contrast, are supposed to be modest, friendly, and orient themselves on quality of family life. A low score signals that the boundaries between male and female roles are more blurred (Hofstede 1998; Van der Lippe et al. 2011). Based on this indicator, gender inequality is lowest in the

Netherlands (14), followed by France (43), while Germany (66) and the United States (62) show the highest levels of gender inequality.

Hypothesis 2: The degree of gender inequality in elite newspaper coverage of arts and culture will (2a) decrease in the European countries but increase slightly in the United States during the period 1955-2005, and (2b) be highest in the United States and lowest in the Netherlands, whereas Germany and France occupy a middle position.

GENDER INEQUALITY IN JOURNALISTIC FIELDS

Yet the question remains: How is such macrostructural and macrocultural inequality translated at the meso-level of the journalistic field? While there are no comparable data directly measuring gender inequality within journalistic fields, we might use the proportion of women journalists as a proxy. Several studies have shown a gradual (quantitative) feminization of journalism, both in Western Europe and in the United States (IWMF 2011). However, whether a quantitative feminization of journalism actually results in a decrease in gender inequality in news coverage is highly debated. Whereas some scholars suggest that gender differences actually affect the propensity to cover female subjects (Armstrong 2004), others have found, at best, weak evidence of such relation, due to reliance on hegemonic masculine journalistic practices (Shor et al. 2014, 767). Indeed, the perceptions of professional journalistic values and conduct are found to be highly gendered as masculine versus feminine, regarding newsworthy topics (politics/crime vs. human interest/culture), angle (facts/sensation vs. background/compassion), sources (men vs. women), and ethics (detached vs. audience needs) (Van Zoonen 1998, 36). However, as art journalists are more often freelancers (Szántó, Levy, and Tyndall 2004), they might be less affected by traditional newsroom socialization.

Hypothesis 3: (3a) The higher the proportion of women journalists, the lower the degree of gender inequality in elite newspaper coverage of arts and culture, (3b) where the strength of the relationship is mediated by the macrostructural and cultural factors discussed above.

Now we will shift our focus from the degree to the nature of gender inequality in the newspaper coverage of arts and culture, particularly the role of artistic genres and different actor types.

SEX SEGREGATION BETWEEN ARTISTIC GENRES

Within the sociology of work, much research has been done on the extent to which men and women are concentrated in different occupations (Charles and Bradley 2009). An occupation is segregated when the majority, usually 70 percent, consists of one or the other sex (Jacobs 1989).² Yet, horizontal and vertical sex segregation in arts and culture have received little systematic attention, despite being strongly linked to inequality, limiting individual autonomy and collective flourishing, and contributing to gender stereotypes (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2015, 25).

Horizontal Sex Segregation: Stereotypes

Horizontal sex segregation occurs when common stereotyped characteristics of men and women strongly overlap with the occupational structure (Anker 1997; Wharton 2012), qualifying women primarily for occupations that focus on care, social interaction and personal relationships, while disqualifying them for instrumental, physical and technical occupations. In almost all Western countries, women are overrepresented in the service sector, particularly in occupations like secretaries, cashiers, and teachers. In contrast, men are overrepresented in the industrial sector (Charles and Grusky 2004). Within arts and culture, there is less research and consensus about what horizontal sex segregation looks like, even though stereotypes arguably play an important role as the value of cultural objects is ambiguous (Stokes 2015). In this article, we have grouped occupations according to artistic genre (similar to domains in occupational studies) and distinguished between more instrumental and more expressive genres.³ When we examine artistic genres in such a way, a clear pattern of horizontal sex segregation emerges in the cultural field.

In all four countries, women are underrepresented in stereotypical technical and instrumental genres. First, we find horizontal sex segregation (<30 percent women) in architecture, particularly in the Netherlands, where women made up 27 percent of all design professionals (including architects) in 2004-2006 (CBS 2011), and in the United States, where 4 percent in 1970 and 22 percent in 2003-2005 of all architects were women (NEA 1994, 2008). There is no data on Germany, and, in a strict sense, there is no horizontal sex segregation in France—but in France women are significantly underrepresented in architecture as 35 percent are women (Cléron and Patureau 2007). Second, women are significantly underrepresented in the technical professions within film, particularly in France (40 percent) and the United States (35 percent), and possibly in classical

music, in which women made up 35 percent in the United States in 2003-2005 and 33 percent of the population in Germany in 2005.⁴

Women are overrepresented in stereotypically expressive genres. First, we find horizontal sex segregation (<30 percent men) within dance, particularly in the United States, where women make up 81 percent (1970) and 76 percent (2003-2005) of the population. No data are available for the European countries. Second, women are overrepresented in the genre of (popular) literature, with the exception of Germany. The proportion of women in literature is 65 percent in France, 63 percent in the Netherlands, and 55 percent in the United States. As such, we hypothesize such over- and underrepresentation in the population to be reflected in the newspaper coverage of arts and culture.

Hypothesis 4: Women will be underrepresented in the elite newspaper coverage about architecture (and to a lesser extent, film and classical music), and overrepresented in dance (and to a lesser extent, literature).

The lack of longitudinal data—for example, the extent to which stereotypical associations have declined—and different genre operationalizations make it impossible to formulate clear expectations on trends and cross-national differences.

Vertical Sex Segregation: Empty Field and Auteur Theory

We speak of vertical sex segregation when one sex—mostly men—occupy the best-paid and/or most prestigious professions (“male primacy”). Indeed, research has consistently found a difference in pay between men and women for identical professions in various occupations (Fischer, Rojahn, and Struyk 2002; Reskin and Hartmann 1988), including those in the domain of arts and culture (NEA 2008). In this article, however, we focus on the differences between artistic genres in the degree of status they enjoy within a society. Previous research suggests two interrelated explanations for change in prestige in relation to gender. The empty field theory suggests that when an artistic genre dominated by women becomes more prestigious, men are attracted to this field, which they see as “empty” because competition from women is considered negligible. As men monopolize it, a genre becomes legitimate, consisting largely of male artists of high status (Tuchman and Fortin 1984). In collaborative artistic genres, men have successfully reframed the role of the director as the creative hub (“author”) vis-à-vis other roles (Baumann

2001). While this *auteur* theory has increased the prestige of such genres (“one creative genius”), it might have affected women’s position in these genres negatively in that it shifts the attention away from performing artists to directors; and in the latter profession women are highly underrepresented.

Data on the longitudinal development of artistic genre prestige are scarce, with the exception of a study by Janssen, Verboord, and Kuipers (2011). They operationalize the relative prestige of artistic genres by the amount of attention devoted to these genres in elite newspapers (Janssen, Verboord, and Kuipers 2011; Table 5). They make a distinction, among others, between traditional “highbrow” art—literature, visual arts, classical music, theater, ballet/modern dance and architecture—and popular culture—popular literature, pop music, popular theater, film and fashion. From 1955 to 2005, attention has risen particularly in pop music (from 2 to 10 percent), and to a lesser extent film (from 17 to 18 percent), popular fiction (from 2 to 3 percent), and architecture (from 2 to 4 percent). The attention to theater (from 17 to 8 percent) and classical music (from 13 to 9 percent) has decreased. We expect that an increase in status will lead to an increase in gender inequality in the working population and thus also in newspaper coverage.

Hypothesis 5: Gender inequality in elite newspaper coverage of arts and culture will increase in genres that have become more prestigious over time, especially pop music, thereby increasing the number of males in the population. Gender inequality will decrease in genres that have become less prestigious over time, including theater and classical music, thereby decreasing the number of men in the population.

SEX SEGREGATION BETWEEN TYPES OF ACTORS

In addition, changes and differences may occur within genres based on the role or function, in this case actor type, that men and women fulfill. Becker (1982) distinguishes between core and support personnel in the division of labor in arts and culture. Core personnel generally refers to the artists themselves, to whom special creative skills (“individual genius”) are ascribed; they are considered irreplaceable in the production of an artwork. Support personnel are social actors performing relatively simple, substitutable, and craft-like rather than creative roles, such as accountants, promotional staff, technicians, etc. As shown in the previous section, men tend to

try to monopolize status; this not only relates to artistic genres, but also to different actor types. Within specific genres of arts and culture, there is a somewhat fuzzy hierarchy between actor types; the profession of director, for example, is considered more prestigious than the profession of stuntman. It is therefore likely that men dominate the most prestigious (“creative”) roles in art worlds, while women are relegated to functions of less prestige. Previous studies indeed indicate that women are not only underrepresented in prestigious leadership positions (Hanna 1988), but they also show that creative jobs tend to be taken by men (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2015, 27). This, in turn, strengthens the social construction of the creative actor as a masculine (“selfish”) subject vis-à-vis the emotional, caring and communicative feminine subject (Taylor 2010). To examine this hypothesis using primary data, we distinguish between, from relatively low to high status, laymen, experts, producers, performing artists, creative artists, and artistic leaders. We expect this gender inequality in the population to be reflected in the newspaper coverage.

Hypothesis 6: The higher the status of an actor type in arts and culture, the higher the gender inequality in the elite newspaper coverage of that type of actor.

Because no longitudinal and cross-national population data are available on the distribution of men and women over the different actor types, we cannot formulate any concrete hypotheses about over- or underrepresentation relative to the proportion of men and women in the various functions.

METHODS

To answer our research question, we use data collected as part of the research project Cultural Classification Systems in Transition (see Janssen, Kuipers, and Verboord 2008). The data consist of newspaper articles that address arts and culture⁵ in two elite newspapers in France (*Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*), Germany (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*), the Netherlands (*NRC Handelsblad*, *de Volkskrant*), and the United States (*New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*) in the years 1955, 1975, 1995, and 2005 (latter part of 2004 and first part of 2005).⁶ A total of 16 researchers performed a quantitative analysis of 24 editions of each newspaper title in each sample year using constructed weeks (Riffe, Aust, and Lacy 1993).⁷ The general database includes more than 18,000 newspaper articles.⁸

For this study, we made a selection from this larger data set, including only articles that focused on one or two actors (15,379). Actors are people, groups, or organizations that are involved in arts and culture, such as laymen (e.g., fans), experts (e.g., critics, funding agencies), producers or mediators (e.g., theater producers, curators), performing artists (e.g., singers, movie actors), creative artists (e.g., writers, composers), or artistic directors (e.g., conductors, choreographers). The intercoder reliability for the choice of variable Actor 1 was sufficiently reliable (Cohen's Kappa = 0.809).

We examine gender inequality by analyzing the ratio of the number of men and women who are mentioned as an actor, instead of the size of attention (cm^2), for several reasons. First, this indicator fits our theoretical approach, given a working population in which artists become successful. To investigate the size of attention would bring other factors into play (e.g., fame). Second, size is not always a good indicator of importance accorded by newspapers; they often write small articles about famous artists, while they sometimes publish long interviews with newcomers. Third, there is a statistical argument: if we calculate the mean size of attention by gender, the differences are rather small. Attention is distributed in a similar way. The main difference can be found in the number of actors that receive attention.

We coded the *sex of each actor*: male (0), female (1), or combination of both (0.5). A combination of both would be, for example, an orchestra, pop group, or arts organization for which we could not retrace the composition. We measured an intercoder reliability of 0.826.⁹ Since we examined the two main actors discussed in each article, the total gender score ranges from 0 to 2. Then we aggregated the article score to the week level; that is, we calculated the percentages of female compared to male actors in the newspaper attention per country per year ($n = 128$ constructed weeks). The percentages based on aggregate score—compared to scores at the article level—increase the reliability of our measure, improve the presentation of our data, and allow parametric tests. Regarding the *sex of the journalist*, we used a coding similar to the sex of the actor.

To measure vertical sex segregation, the status of each actor was coded using *actor types* mentioned earlier. Within each category, the female/male ratio has been calculated. The intercoder reliability (Actor 1) was Cohen's Kappa = 0.780. Each article has also been coded for the artistic *genre* that was discussed most prominently, which allows us to study horizontal sex segregation (instrumental vs. expressive) and vertical sex segregation (genre prestige). In the original data set, the genre classification was measured in three steps: discipline (e.g., literature), main genre

(e.g., narrative prose), and subgenre (e.g., literary prose).¹⁰ Here these variables have been merged into 11 genres, including six traditional “highbrow” genres (literature, visual arts, classical music, theater, ballet/modern dance, and architecture), and five popular culture genres (popular literature, pop music, popular theater, film, and fashion). As described previously, the classification of artistic genres as instrumental or expressive is somewhat tentative because of the lack of empirical indicators. Here we consider architecture (and to a lesser extent, film and classical music) as more instrumental, and dance and fashion (and to a lesser extent, literature) as more expressive. Not only do the genres represent the dimension discussed in the theory, but also they are sufficiently covered in elite newspaper to make reliable statements.

We use univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare and test the mean proportion of female actors between countries and years. Because of the necessary aggregation to weeks, we have a relatively small sample, and for the United States an unequal number of research units. Therefore, not all variables satisfy the assumption of homogeneity of variance. The results of the significance tests should be interpreted with some caution.

Little Longitudinal Change, If at All

Table 2(A) shows the proportion of women in elite newspaper articles about arts and culture between 1955 and 2005 in the four studied countries. Surprisingly, their share remains at around 20-25 percent throughout the whole fifty-year period. The only reason we do find significant over time differences ($F[3, 112] = 11.74, p = 0.000$) is due to a dip—a deviation from the trend—in 1975 in three of the four countries. Yet we expected that women in the course of time would receive an increasing share of all coverage of arts and culture, since the proportion of women working in arts and culture in all four countries gradually increased to 45-50 percent in 2005, or at least in the European countries (as suggested by the gender inequality indices). Table 2(A) suggests we have to reject hypotheses 1a and 2a. Moreover, while Table 2(B) demonstrates a feminization of journalism ($F[3, 112] = 6.292, p = 0.001$), we did not find evidence of a (strong) linear correlation between the percentage of women journalists and the coverage of women actors, with the exception of the year 1995. It also stated in the next section which is about country differences. Rejecting hypothesis 3a may suggest that—despite its quantitative feminization—elite newspaper journalism has retained its masculine character, and this may explain the absence of longitudinal change in the coverage of women in arts and culture.

TABLE 2: Percentage Women/Women Journalists in Elite Newspaper Coverage of Arts and Culture per Constructed Week (N = 128).

	1955	1975	1995	2005	Germany	Netherlands	United States
A. Coverage of women							
France	19.1	14.5	20.6	22.2	n.s.	n.s.	***
Germany	12.5	13.9	19.2	21.6		†	***
Netherlands	20.0	15.8	21.3	20.8			***
United States	30.2	22.6	26.6	25.5			
Total	20.5	16.7	21.9	22.5			
B. Women journalists							
France	4.4	28.7	28.2	45.5	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Germany	10.3	26.4	25.5	24.7		.	.
Netherlands	44.5	22.0	30.1	28.3			n.s.
United States	23.2	25.6	38.4	36.3			
Total	20.6	25.7	30.5	33.7			

NOTE: Estimates marginal means in analysis of variance of percentage women actors, based on four constructed weeks (LAT: 3) per year per newspaper.
Significance test post-hoc Bonferroni: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.10$.

Limited Cross-National Differences

Table 2(A) also gives us insight into the cross-national differences in the elite newspaper attention to female vis-à-vis male actors in arts and culture. In 1955, between 12 and 20 percent of all actors discussed in European newspapers were female; in the United States, this was 30 percent. This explains the significant country differences ($F[3, 112] = 28.35, p = 0.000$). Over the course of time, these differences have become smaller (interaction effect is significant: $F[9, 112] = 2.62, p = 0.009$), because Germany “caught up” with the other countries and the percentage increased slightly in France, whereas the share of women in American elite newspapers never again reached the same level as in 1955. As such, we have to reject hypotheses 2b and 3b, because—contrary to what the gender inequality indices predicted—the coverage in U.S. elite newspapers is actually less unequal than in their European counterparts, and we only find a strong linear relationship between the percentage of women journalists and the coverage of women actors in Germany. Hypothesis 1b—predicting the absence of cross-national differences—seems to be partly (with the exception of the year 1955) confirmed.

Some Evidence of Sex Segregation

While women on average receive about 20-25 percent of the total elite newspaper attention devoted to arts and culture, Table 3 shows great variation between “highbrow” and popular culture genres, despite being underrepresented in the coverage of all artistic genres.

First, regarding horizontal sex segregation, we find some support for hypothesis 4. Throughout the studied period, women are highly underrepresented (<30 percent) in the attention devoted to architecture (2-6 percent)—which remains a stereotypical masculine genre—and in classical music (13-20 percent) and, to a lesser extent, in film (13-24 percent). Yet, we also find horizontal sex segregation in the newspaper coverage of both forms of theater, visual arts, and even popular literature. And although women are best represented in the stereotypical feminine genres of ballet/modern dance (29-46 percent) and fashion (24-43 percent), we do not find the anticipated overrepresentation.

Second, regarding vertical sex segregation, the percentage of women is increasing in “highbrow” artistic genres in particular. However, whereas hypothesis 5 predicted an increase in artistic genres that decreased in prestige during the period 1955-2005 (theater and classical music), women have actually gained most ground in literature and visual arts (Table 3). Whereas both genres were male strongholds (respectively 83 and 90 percent) in elite newspaper coverage in 1955, in 2005 nearly one in three covered actors in literature were women, and a fifth in the visual arts. The trend in classical music shows, as predicted, similarities with visual arts (from 13 to 19 percent). Furthermore, the percentage of women in elite newspaper coverage has been greatly reduced within popular culture genres (“empty fields”). As expected in hypothesis 5, in both pop music and film, an increase in prestige co-occurs with a decline in the percentage of women.¹¹ While in 1955, popular music was an empty field dominated by low-status easy listening music, the arrival of rock music apparently also made the genre more the domain of masculine authorship (Frith and McRobbie 1990). In film, the largest popular genre, we also see a decrease: in 2005, less than a fifth of all actors were women, whereas in 1955 women made up a quarter of the total elite newspaper coverage of film. The emergence of *auteur* theory in the late 1950s might have affected women’s position in film negatively.¹² This has shifted the attention away from performing artists to directors, and in the latter profession women were highly underrepresented. Popular fiction is an exception to the rule—here a rise in prestige goes hand in hand with an increase in the proportion of women in elite newspaper coverage—which might be due to a feminization of demand (Verboord 2011).

TABLE 3: Percentage Women in Elite Newspaper Coverage of "Highbrow" and Popular Culture Genres per Constructed Week (N=128).

Genre	Year				Country		Interaction		Interpretation (Significant) Country Differences
	1955	1975	1995	2005	(df = 3, 112)	(df = 3, 112)	(df = 9, 112)	(df = 9, 112)	
Highbrow									Women highest share in:
Literature (2,149)	16.7	20.8	26.2	31.3	$F = 6.5^{***}$	$F = 15.5^{***}$	$F = 1.6$		U.S. (during the whole period)
Visual arts (1,523)	10.2	10.8	20.1	19.3	$F = 8.5^{***}$	$F = 7.6^{***}$	$F = 0.9$		U.S. (particularly 1955/1975)
Classical music (1,873)	12.9	20.2	18.2	19.1	$F = 3.1^*$	$F = 8.9^{***}$	$F = 1.8$		U.S. (particularly 1955/1975/2005)
Theatre (1,505)	20.1	17.4	23.9	24.3	$F = 1.6$	$F = 0.8$	$F = 0.5$		n.s.
Ballet/modern dance (399)	41.3	28.9	39.4	46.1	$F = 2.4^\dagger$	$F = 1.0$	$F = 1.5$		n.s.
Architecture (261)	2.1	4.8	5.5	4.2	$F = 0.2$	$F = 3.2^*$	$F = 1.2$		U.S. (1955/1975/1995)
Popular									
Popular literature (611)	12.0	13.4	28.7	27.3	$F = 3.7^*$	$F = 1.9$	$F = 0.9$		n.s.
Pop music (1,341)	35.9	20.5	19.7	19.5	$F = 3.1^*$	$F = 0.1$	$F = 0.3$		n.s.
Popular theatre (421)	22.7	13.6	25.7	29.2	$F = 1.9$	$F = 1.1$	$F = 1.5$		n.s.
Film (2,883)	24.2	13.3	20.5	19.6	$F = 5.0^{**}$	$F = 0.5$	$F = 0.5$		n.s.
Fashion (383)	43.1	28.0	23.8	42.4	$F = 2.0$	$F = 2.8^*$	$F = 0.6$		U.S. and NL (1955/1975)

NOTE: Estimates marginal means in analysis of variance of percentage female actors, based on 4 constructed weeks (LAT: 3) per year per newspaper. Between brackets are the number of articles. NL = Netherlands.

Significance test: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, $^\dagger p < 0.10$

Third, without having formulated concrete hypotheses, we hardly see any cross-national differences in the elite newspaper coverage of women in arts and culture, especially in popular genres. We observe some cross-national differences within “highbrow” genres, in which—not surprisingly in light of previous findings—women are best represented in the United States. Possibly U.S. elite newspapers are more receptive to potential criticism regarding the representation of women (and minorities) as a result of the so-called canon wars, which targeted mainly male, white enclaves within “high” culture (Bryson 2005).

Higher Status, Fewer Women

Table 4 shows the gender distribution by type of actor, loosely expressed in status categories. Laymen is the only category in which women are overrepresented, which unsurprisingly has a comparatively low status. Except for a dip in 1975, women consistently make up around 60 percent of laymen covered in elite newspapers. However, as the status of an actor type increases, the proportion of women in the total newspaper coverage of arts and culture decreases, as predicted (hypothesis 6). Of course, one can debate the exact status hierarchy between types of actors. Yet our results clearly indicate that artistic directors are most often men (in 2005, only 9 percent are women), followed by producers (between 6 and 12 percent) and creative artists (between 8 and 13 percent). Art-related experts and performing artists discussed in newspapers are on average more often women; after 1995, women were around a quarter. However, there are some interesting longitudinal changes. Whereas the percentage of women among covered performing artists decreases, the proportion of women experts sharply increases as well as—albeit slightly—their share among creative artists and artistic directors. These trends are all significant. Again, U.S. elite newspapers take the lead in the decrease in gender inequality.

A possible explanation for these trends might be found in the aforementioned *auteur* theory. The role of artistic director however was largely a role fulfilled by men. Because the proportion of women directors covered in the elite newspapers between 1955 and 1975 increased only from 2 to 4 percent, and remains at about 7 percent in theater, fewer women were discussed. In particular, the U.S. newspapers intellectualized after 1955: both the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* wrote many short news items about film and Broadway stars in 1955 and this was much less the case in the following decades. Moreover, among film and theater

TABLE 4: Percentage Women in Elite Newspaper Coverage per Actor Type (N=128).

Actor type	Year				Country		Interaction		Interpretation (Significant) Country Differences
	1955	1975	1995	2005	(df = 3, 70)	(df = 3, 70)	(df = 9, 70)	(df = 9, 70)	
Laymen (469)	61.8	46.8	59.2	66.4	F = 0.9	F = 0.7	F = 0.9	F = 0.9	Women highest share in: n.s.
Experts (1,551)	11.2	15.8	25.8	24.0	F = 3.4*	F = 3.3*	F = 1.2	F = 1.2	
Producers (2,508)	12.3	5.5	11.2	11.7	F = 1.6	F = 3.9*	F = 2.9**	F = 2.9**	U.S. (particularly 1975); GER lowest share (particularly 1955/1975) NL (1955) and U.S. (2005) FR and GER (1975/1995/2005) U.S. (whole period) and NL (particularly 1975) n.s.
Performing artists (7,030)	38.7	29.7	25.1	24.4	F = 13.2***	F = 2.8*	F = 0.4	F = 0.4	
Creative artists (6,924)	8.0	8.0	11.6	13.1	F = 11.5***	F = 12.7***	F = 0.8	F = 0.8	
Artistic directors (3,615)	2.8	4.3	12.5	8.7	F = 19.6***	F = 1.8	F = 2.4*	F = 2.4*	

NOTE: Estimates marginal means in analysis of variance of percentage female actors, based on 4 constructed weeks (LAT: 3) per year per newspaper. Between brackets are the number of articles. FR = France; GER = Germany; NL = Netherlands.
Significance test: ***p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05, †p < 0.10.

actors, women are relatively less often mentioned as first—instead of second—actor in 1975, compared to 1955 and 1995. Whether this means that the decade of the 1970s was generally an inhospitable one for women's emancipation in the arts is difficult to say on the basis of one sample year. It is, however, striking that this lack of attention occurred in multiple countries and genres.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This article examined the extent and in what ways gender inequality has changed in the elite newspaper coverage of arts and culture in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States in the period 1955-2005. First, whereas in other societal domains the trend of decreasing gender inequality has only recently stalled, gender inequality in the elite newspaper coverage of arts and culture has hardly decreased at all over the last five decades. In our last sample year, 2005, approximately 20-25 percent of all elite newspaper articles on arts and culture are devoted to women, surprisingly similar to the reference year 1955 (13-30 percent), pointing to a “glass ceiling.” In contrast, the percentage of women working in arts and culture has increased in each of the four countries from about 30-35 percent in 1975 to 45-50 percent in 2005. As such, we found no reflection of the working population or a clear link to societal (structural or cultural) gender inequality in general. This leaves us with two possible explanations. First, despite its quantitative feminization, the nature of journalism might have retained its masculine character, resisting commercial pressures in a more feminine direction (Van Zoonen 1998). Second, possibly because of the informality and inflexibility of such work, the proportion of highly successful women in the arts and culture has not increased (Taylor 2010), which explains why women still receive little attention in newspapers (Dowd, Liddle, and Blyler 2005; Verboord 2012).

Second, we found surprisingly few cross-national differences. As compared to European newspapers, the attention paid to women in arts and culture in U.S. elite newspapers is less unequal, rather than more, as predicted on the basis of societal gender inequality indices. Perhaps societal gender inequality in the United States is more weakly correlated to gender inequality in the newspaper coverage of arts and culture; that is, the audience and producers of U.S. elite newspapers—and the arts in general—deviate more strongly in terms of liberal values compared to the national population (Benson 2006; Table 1). In addition, we found that cross-national

differences declined during the period 1955-2005. This trend might be explained by increased globalization of arts and culture (including global superstars) and the international orientation of European elite newspapers (Janssen, Kuipers, and Verboord 2008).

Third, women are underrepresented in the elite newspaper coverage of all artistic genres; however, there are clear differences between genres. To a certain extent, we found evidence of horizontal sex segregation. As expected, architecture, and to a lesser extent, classical music and film, remain stereotypical masculine genres over time, but this also goes for both forms of theater, visual arts, and even popular literature. Modern dance and fashion remain stereotypical feminine genres without women being overrepresented in the coverage of these genres. In addition, the percentage of women increased especially in “highbrow” artistic genres, particularly genres that have become less prestigious over time: theater and classical music, as well as literature and the visual arts. Furthermore, the results show that the percentage of women decreased sharply in the coverage of popular culture genres, particularly those that have increased in status like pop music and film. In the case of popular literature, this is likely to be the result of the feminization of both the demand and supply of fiction books (e.g., Verboord 2011). Remarkably, the rise in status of the popular arts have not stimulated a rise in the coverage of female artists. The empty field theory, which hypothesizes that an increase in genre status leads to a greater influx of men, can only be confirmed partially. The lack of valid nonmedia indicators to assess the changing status of artistic genres—and vertical sex segregation in the working population—makes it difficult to conclude whether newspaper critics and editors are gender biased or whether there has been a change in the working population.

Finally, we found strong evidence for the importance of the status of actor types. The underrepresentation of women in prestigious positions, whether as artistic directors or as producers, is a formidable obstacle for media attention, especially since elite newspapers—because of competition from online news sites—increasingly focus on the context of the arts (the “behind the scenes” perspective). In addition, our findings suggest that institutionalized inequalities are reproduced over time. Gendered genre conventions seem to contribute to sex segregation and keep gender inequality in place. Architects and film directors remain mostly men, while in ballet and fashion women are much more likely to move on to artistic leadership. More research into gender inequality within genres should attempt to more clearly distinguish the status of actor types as well

as the distribution of actor types in the working population. Moreover, how do gender stereotypes play out at the level of the journalistic field?

Based on an extensive data set, this study paints a representative picture of the trends in the attention elite newspapers give to women vis-à-vis men in arts and culture. Yet it also has a number of limitations. First, because of a lack of comparable cross-national and longitudinal indicators, our measurements are not always optimal for strictly testing the theories. Second, we have analyzed a limited number of years, countries, and constructed weeks. The significance tests of trends and country differences should therefore be interpreted with caution. Third, our study does not show how journalists write about men and women in the arts: This is an important avenue for further research. We would like to emphasize, however, that the eight examined newspapers are among the leading media outlets in the four selected countries. Perhaps their societal impact has declined over the years as a result of declining circulation figures, but they remain relatively important for public opinion formation surrounding culture. Nevertheless, future research might compare newspapers, television programs and Internet sites concerning gender inequality in attention to arts and culture. This might help us to further improve our knowledge about the development of women's emancipation in arts and culture and the role of the media in this process.

NOTES

1. Table 1 should be interpreted with caution because populations have been measured in different ways in the four countries.

2. Reasons include differences in terms of socialization and the effect of children on the choices men and women make, as well as unequal opportunities on the labor market as a result of statistical discrimination and the network structure of many internal labor markets (Wharton 2012).

3. As national statistical organizations all use different genre definitions and classifications, we can only paint a somewhat crude picture. Because work—level and nature—in artistic genres varies considerably (see Table 4), we do not use the term *profession* but instead use *genre*, since specific combinations of gendered expectations and conventions are recognized and shared by producers, performers, critics, and audiences (Lena and Peterson 2008, 698).

4. A comparison is complicated since in the United States the category Producers and Directors also contains theater and television. Moreover, the performing arts categories of Germany (47 percent women) and the Netherlands (34 percent women) consist of various genres and professions, whereas the German category Music also includes composers and conductors.

5. We did not include culture in the broad sense (e.g., religion, politics). Newspaper coverage of books and television was only coded when it addressed fiction. Applied arts (design, fashion, advertising) were included when there was a “creator,” for example, haute couture, but not a regular H&M collection.

6. We included, at least for the European countries, one more conservative and one more centrist-progressive newspaper. However, we found no clear link between political orientation and coverage of women in arts and culture.

7. Sunday editions are included as part of Saturday editions.

8. A 200+ page codebook is available on request.

9. In case of doubt, original data were checked, but not the recoding.

10. The intercoder reliability for the first two variables was, respectively, Cohen’s Kappa = 0.916 and 0.828. The categories of variable Subgenre were too scattered to do a proper reliability test.

11. The largest country differences occur within “highbrow” genres, where the U.S. papers discuss the highest percentage of women. At the genre level, we found no interaction effects between country and year: differences between countries remain constant. American newspapers are most affected by the dip in 1975; where European newspapers show a steady increase, the development in the United States is often not linear.

12. An important development takes place in 1975: in both film and theater, the coverage of artistic directors increases at the expense of performing artists. Zooming in on actor 1, we see that the percentage of artistic leaders rises from 19 to 60 percent (film) and from 21 to 30 percent (theater), while the attention paid to performing actors decreases from 57 to 21 percent (film) and 39 to 34 percent (theater).

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